

tion of the symbols. As regards the discussion of the edict of DEVĀ-NAMPIYATISSA, the testimony of JAMBULUS is invaluable, because it proves that written characters,—our written characters, were then in use, (notwithstanding the Buddhist books were not made up till two centuries later :) and it establishes the credit of a much vituperated individual, who has been so lightly spoken of, that WILFORD endeavours to identify him with Sindbad the sailor and other equally marvellous travellers !

III.—*Notice of a Colossal Alto-Relievo, known by the name of Mata Kooñr, situated near Kussia Tannah, in Pergunnah Sidowa, Eastern Division of Gorakhpur District. By D. LISTON, Esq.*

Should a traveller happen to encamp at *Kussia*, a village situated about five kos from the *Chapra* boundary in the *Gorakhpur* district and on the road joining the two stations, it may so happen that his eye may alight on a pyramidal-looking mound of bricks about half a mile S. W. of the *serai*, over which spreads a magnificent banyan tree. Should he be of an inquisitive turn, his natural inquiries will be, what is it, and who has the fame of being its builder ? He will be informed that it once belonged to *Mata Kooñr** ; a somewhat less ruined brick pyramid with other brick mounds, about three-quarters of a mile to the west of the object that first caught his observation, will probably be pointed out as *Mata Kooñr's* fort ; and if it should be observed that our traveller's curiosity is thus excited, he will be told that *Mata Kooñr* himself lies petrified at but a short distance from his former place of abode. A walk of about a couple of furlongs from the ruins, called the fort, will bring our traveller to the side of a colossal *alto-relievo* of very respectable execution, surrounded by much carved work, many of the figures of which are well designed and cut, though others of them are of an exaggerated and outré character ; but the features of almost all the images, as well as those of the principal idol, he will find have been destroyed with an unsparing hand, and with a care worthy of a better object.

Not only have the countenances of the figures been defaced, but an inscription, of which I send you the remaining lines as correctly as I can copy them, seems at the same time to have been erased, or ground out, the bigotry which prompted the one deed having doubtless also instigated to the commission of the other more irreparable and lamentable outrage.

* *Mrita Kumára*, the dead *kumára* (god of war).—ED.

The inscription, of which No. 1 forms the remaining portion of the two first and only lines left, seems to have occupied the whole of what I may denominate the shield, if we consider the surrounding carving as emblazonry, which it much resembles. Some additional writing has also existed on each side of this scroll or shield on a sort of cornice, but that on the left hand of the figure has been so completely obliterated that we can only now venture to assert that there has been writing. Of the remains on the other side the letters given in No. 2 may be considered as a careful attempt at a copy.

Mata Kooñr is an object of worship in this vicinity, and that his fame extends into neighbouring districts I had a proof in a pilgrim from *Bettiah* pouring a vial of *gangotri* water on his sacred head whilst I was engaged with the sketch, of which I enclose a copy. The head, too, bears marks of being periodically anointed by a serving brahmin with *ghee*.

The enclosed sketch is to be considered as a plan of the design, and was taken from actual measurement. It struck me as rather remarkable in taking these measurements, that the results were generally in complete inches and almost never in fractions of that unit.

The countenance is that of a young man : the chin well turned, the forehead out of proportion, large. The appearance of the head seems to have been given by the hair having been twisted into pyramidal spirals.

Mata Kooñr is supposed to be a divinity of considerable power. Some years ago a *lohar* cut a piece from his left arm for the purpose of making a whet-stone ; which sacrilege occasioned the death of himself and entire family—it is said by disease.

Tradition relates that *Mata Kooñr* on the arrival of a Musulman army to attack his fort, feeling himself unable to cope with the force arrayed against him, caused his family and dependants to descend into a well, and he himself having become a stone, lay down on the mouth of it in order to conceal it from his enemy, and to ensure that no disgrace should befall the objects of his affection. A few years ago a gentleman, (name not now remembered,) caused the stone to be removed from its site in order to ascertain whether it covered a well or no; but none was found : the stone or pieces (for the stone has split from end to end nearly in the middle) were not put back in their original position ;—a dry season followed, and the cultivators of the neighbouring villages deeming that this was occasioned by the wrath of *Mata Kooñr*, came in a body and laid him again in the position which he had been known to occupy for many preceding generations.

The stone is apparently a black clay-slate.

I may mention that the appearance of the petals of the flower on the sole of the fragment of the left foot (for one foot and one hand are mutilated) would almost induce a belief that the statue was not quite finished when subjected to the ruthless hand of the destroyer. The other parts of the sculpture give an idea of its having been completed and finished with much care. The two figures of the eight-armed goddess in particular seem to me very well designed and executed.

The group outside what may be termed the frame of the principal figure consists of two stout male personages having each at his left hand a figure of the same sex, but of not more than half the height. The form next *Mata Kooñr* seems of more than Herculean proportions, and has apparently a flame or a glory about his head. His left hand rests on the head of a goat, I think, without horns and with pendent ears. The less robust figure has a disc with eight petals in each of his hands, which are held up so that the discs appear over his shoulders. He seems dressed in short drawers and short boots, whilst the apparel of his stouter companion more resembles that usually worn in the country.

The three aërial figures waving necklaces (?) over the eight-armed goddess, occupy rather more space on the stone than they appear to do in the sketch.

The waved line in the cornice over the head of *Mata Kooñr* is in the original an ornamental carving.

[NOTE.—We have delayed the publication of this notice, with the intention of lithographing the sketch ; but although sufficient to shew that the image is one of *BUDDHA*, surrounded with the smaller compartments descriptive of various acts of his life, surmounted also above by angels and gods, and below supported by the *sinha* and elephant, it is not distinct enough for the pencil. The inscriptions also are far too much abraded to be legible—but they probably contain nothing more than the ordinary couplet. The Buddhist monument to which the image belonged was probably connected with the *lât* in the same district described by Mr. HODGSON in the Journal of the Asiatic Society, vol. III. page 482. The name of that *lât* situated between the town of *Bettiah* and the *Gandak* is *Mathia*, evidently the patronymic of *Mata* or *Matha* ; *Kooñr*, or *Kunwar*, is a corruption of *Kumára*, the youthful, or the god of war :—or it may be derived from his adventure in the well, *kuñwa*. *Mata Kumára* might also be interpreted, ‘the defunct *Kumára*,’ but in any case the vulgar appellation has nothing to do with the original intention of the image.—ED.]